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# PESTICIDE SAFETY IN YOUR HOME

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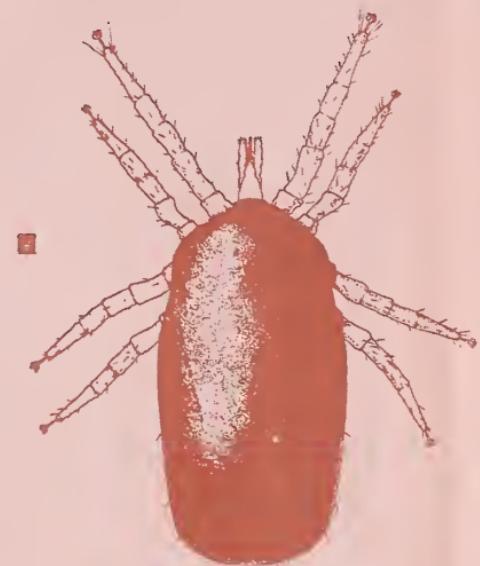


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 = Actual Size



Clothes Moth



A Bird Mite



Flour Beetle

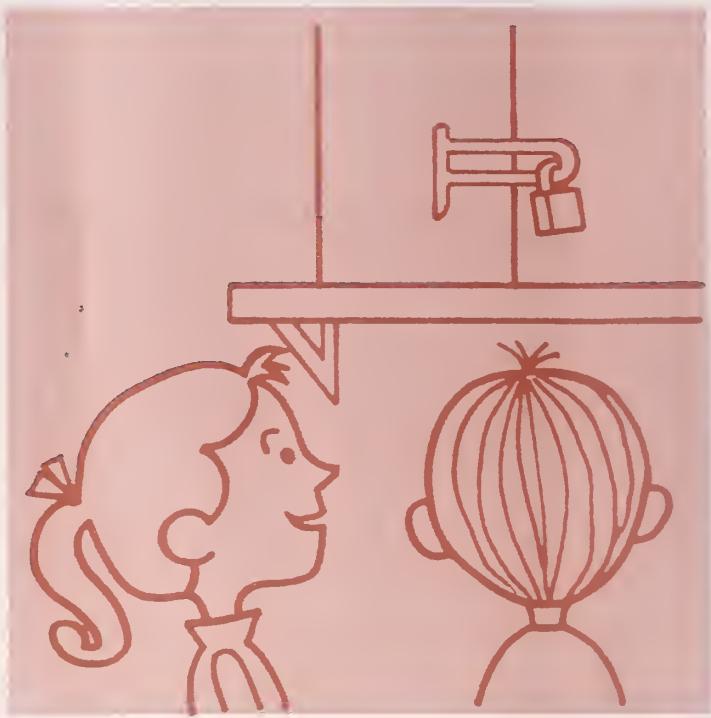


Black Carpet  
Beetle Larva

Brown-banded Cockroach



Firebrat



Bugs may be attractive to small boys, but to the average adult they are a nuisance. Especially in your home. They get into kitchen shelves and make waste of your food. They get into closets and ruin your clothes. Fleas bite your pets and mosquitoes bite you. Flies carry disease.

It takes a combination of continuous good housekeeping and correct pest control methods to keep household pests under control. The menace posed by these pests to comfort, property, and health has made pesticides a necessary part of our way of life—inaluable in maintaining strict sanitation and high standards of living.

But just as you need pesticides to help keep your home pest-free, you need the knowledge of how to handle them correctly in order to do the job safely.

Pesticides must be toxic in order to kill pests. They're not automatically safe. It's how you handle pesticides that makes their use safe or unsafe.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Point of Purchase

You take the first step toward safety at the store where you buy a pesticide. Don't buy it in a hurry. Take your time and make sure you're getting the right product.

Check the label to find out whether the pest you want to get rid of is listed. Read the directions to be sure you can safely use it in your home.

Check on whether the product is a surface spray or a space spray. It's important because a space spray isn't effective on surfaces and a surface spray may be dangerous when used to spray the air.

Surface sprays are for crawling insects. The container label usually says "residual" or the directions make it clear that you apply the product to surfaces.

If you intend to spray the air, buy a space spray. The label generally identifies the product as a space spray or a mist. Space sprays are meant to knock down flying insects. They contain less hazardous pesticides than surface sprays—that's why they can be used safely to spray the air.

### Safe Storage Important

The main thing to remember when you get home after you've bought a pesticide—including mothballs—is to put it where the children can't reach it. The sooner the better.

Check the label to see if it has any special directions about storage. If the product is flammable, for instance, it shouldn't be stored near heat.

In any case, don't store a pesticide near food or where it could get mixed up with cleaning supplies, other household items, or medicines.

Always keep a pesticide in its original container, closed tight and well labeled. If the original label comes off, paste it back on again.

If you find a container in the house that has lost its label, don't try to guess what's in the container—carefully dispose of it.

### Using a Pesticide

The key to safety at this point is: don't depend on your memory.



Give the label another reading just before you use a pesticide. *Every* time you use it.

Banish pets and their food and water dishes before you spray a room. Remove birds, bird cages, aquariums, and fish bowls.

Take everything out of the pantry or dish cabinets when you spray the shelves. Wait until the spray dries and then cover the shelves with clean paper or foil before you put things back. Pesticides should never be allowed to get on food, dishes, pots, or pans. Don't spray the inside of a refrigerator or oven.

Most surface sprays should be applied only to limited surfaces in your home. Don't treat entire floors, walls, or ceilings.

Smoking is taboo when you are using a pesticide. All pesticides can be carried from hand to mouth by your cigarette. Some are flammable.

Don't combine different pesticides.

Don't let the children help. Keep them away from where you are mixing or using a pesticide.

Look out for yourself, too. If you spill a pesticide, don't let it stay on your skin. Wash it off with soap and water right away. Avoid prolonged inhalation of insecticide sprays or dusts.

When you've finished using a pesticide, wash your face and hands with soap and water as a matter of routine. If you've spilled a pesticide on your clothes, take them off and wash contaminated skin. Launder clothes before wearing again.

#### **Caution—Empty Container**

An empty pesticide container can be as hazardous as a full one.

Whatever you do, don't put anything into an empty pesticide container. It should never be used again.

Wrap empty containers or those with unwanted pesticides in several layers of newspapers and promptly put them in the trash can. Put the lid of the can on tightly. Don't burn a cardboard container or a sack that has had a pesticide in it. They should go into the trash can, too.

#### **In Case of Emergency**

Suppose someone in your family, or one of the neighborhood children, accidentally swallows a pesticide. Or that you spilled some on yourself and feel ill later on.

The best thing you can do is go straight to the pesticide container.

Administer first aid if recommended on the label.

Call your doctor immediately in any case. Read him the label—the active chemical ingredient of the pesticide will be named on the label. Take the container with you if you go to a doctor or hospital for help.

The more toxic pesticides are marked "POISON" and have an antidote listed on the label. If a pesticide has been swallowed, follow the antidote directions and call your doctor right away.

In many cities there is a Poison Control Center. You can call the Center and ask what to do if you suspect pesticide poisoning. Consult your local telephone directory to find out if there is one near you.



## SOME COMMON HOUSEHOLD PESTS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM\*

PEST	WHAT TO USE**	WHERE AND HOW TO USE
Ants	Surface spray. Chlordane, diazinon, lindane, or malathion.	Apply to surface over which ants are crawling. Treat cracks they may be using to get into the house. Try to find the ants' nest and treat it.
Clothes moths Carpet beetles	Spray labeled for this specific use. Methoxychlor, Perthane, or Strobane.	Spray lightly and uniformly on woolens until they are moist. Don't soak or saturate them.
	Naphthalene flakes or balls, or paradichlorobenzene crystals.	Store in airtight closets or containers with the woolens. In trunk-size container, use 1 pound of pesticide; in a closet use 1 pound for each 100 cubic feet of space.
Cockroaches	Surface spray or dust. Diazinon, malathion, or ronnel. For other than the German cockroach, chlordane, or lindane may also be used. (Space spray may be useful to drive roaches out of hard-to-reach spots.)	For severe infestations use both spray and dust. Spray first; then apply dust after the spray dries, forcing the dust into cracks. Apply enough spray to moisten surfaces thoroughly, but not enough to drip or run. Apply to places where roaches hide—under sinks, behind window and door frames, on undersides of tables and chairs, on closet and bookcase shelves, in cracks around cabinets, etc.
Houseflies Mosquitoes	Space spray.	Follow directions on the label. Be sure the label says the spray is for flying insects.
Rodent or bird mites Food mites	Surface spray. Malathion.	Treat infested areas. If mites are in food shelves, use a surface spray containing not more than 2 percent of malathion.
Pantry pests (Beetles, moth larvae, "weevils")	Surface spray. Not more than 2 percent chlordane, 2 percent malathion, or 0.5 percent lindane.	Before buying pesticide, check the label to be sure it contains the proper amount of the chemical. Spray lightly, take care not to overspray. Spray only when shelves are empty. Let spray dry before filling shelves again. Discard infested pantry items.
Silverfish Firebrats	Surface spray. Chlordane, diazinon, ronnel, lindane, or malathion.	Apply to baseboards, door and window casings, closets, and places where pipes go through walls. If spray has oil-solution base, do not apply near electric motors, gas pilot flames, or other places where it might catch fire.
	Dust. Not more than 6 percent chlordane, 1 percent lindane, or 5 percent malathion.	Apply with hand duster in same places recommended for spraying. Force dust into cracks. (Dust can be used in places where an oil-solution spray might start a fire.)
Spiders	Surface spray. Malathion, lindane, or ronnel.	Apply to webs and infested areas.

\*For more complete information, you can buy copies of Home and Garden Bulletins No. 96, "Controlling Household Pests," for 15 cents each, and No. 113, "Protecting Woolens Against Clothes Moths and Carpet Beetles," for 10 cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

\*\*Trade names are used in this bulletin solely for the purpose of providing specific information. Mention of a trade name does not constitute a guarantee or warranty of the product by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The *United States Department of Agriculture* is responsible for enforcing a law that requires all pesticides shipped in interstate commerce to be properly registered and labeled. *State authorities* are responsible for making sure that pesticides shipped within a State are properly labeled. *It's up to YOU to see that pesticides are used safely.*



*Use Pesticides Safely*  
**FOLLOW THE LABEL**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**REVISED MAY 1970**

